ROMANCE.

BY ANDREW LANG.

My love dwelt in a Northern land.
A gray tower in a forest green
Was hers, and far on either hand
The long wash of the waves was seen,
And leagues on leagues of yellow sand
And woven forest boughs between.

And through the silver Northern night
The sunset slowly died away,
And herds of strange deer, lily white,
Stole forth among the branches gray;
About the coming of the light
They fled like ghosts before the day!

I know not if the forest green
Still girdles round that castle gray;
I know not if the boughs between
The white deer vanish ere the day;
Above my love the grass is green,
My heart is colder than the clay!

HIS INSPIRATION.

Hope Whitney laid the crisp, new bills and the old ones one upon another.

"Just twenty," she said, with a low laugh like the thrill of a happy bird.

But before I go any further let me tell you something about Hope Whitney.

Her father died before her birth, and the pale young mother, baptizing the unconscious baby face with bitter tears, had named her Hope.

Then she had taken up the hand-to-hand struggle bravely—almost cheerfully, for little Hope's sake—as women of deep natures, who have loved once truly and well, are apt to do.

She hung out a small sign, "Mrs. Whitney Dressmaking," just at the side of the door, and above the red rose tree which her husband had planted the very day he brought home to the "bird's nest," as he called the little one-story cottage. And after that the headaches and the backaches—and worse still, the heartaches, because there was no one to care—began in earnest.

Seventeen years of struggle, of ingenious turnings to make the most out of a little, and then the story of her life ended—as nearly as life-stories ever end. For this life of ours possesses a strange element, that is not only to go on eternally into the great unseen, but is also to leave behind upon the earth an enduring influence either for good or for evil.

The best of the summer had been intense. Mrs. Whitney had overworked, and there had followed a few days of quite alarming illness.

It was the early evening of a sultry summer day. The sun had set in a flood of splendor, the birds had chirped their good-night, and the moonlight flooded the room with a halo of pale glory.

Mother and daughter were alone, with low heart talks falling in between the tender pauses that seemed filled with a nameless something that drew Hope closer to her mother.

Mrs. Whitney had been lying with face turned toward the open window, where the red roses nodded their sweet, heavy heads, when suddenly she stretched out her thin, white hands with a glad cry:

'Oh, Harry! Harry!'

And Hope, kneeling beside the bed, awed into silence by the smile as of a great peace that still lay upon the beautiful face, knew that she was motherless.

The three years that followed were hard ones to Hope, but she possessed a brave, bright spirit and a courage that knew no faltering.

For two years she had been teacher of the village school, and, by careful economy, had made the debit and credit of her accounts balance at the end of each year.

For months she had been laying by a little, now and then, for the purchase of a winter cloak until the dollars counted up to twenty.

Do you think the getting of a new cloak an easy matter?

To her it was not. But her old one was worn and had a behind the-times look that annoyed her every time she put it on.

It is natural for young girls—and old ones, too—to like nice, becoming clothing.

Hope, my little heroine, was only a brave, sweet, natural girl, and I liked her all the better because she did care for the pretty effect of a bow of ribbon, a fall of lace, or a bright flower at her throat or among the waves of her brown hair, and because she wanted a new cloak to show off her trim, graceful figure.

"Just the very thing, is it not?" asked the polite merchant, as Hope viewed her reflection in the full-length mirror, habited in a handsome, warm cloak.

The girl smiled softly, while a bright rose-flush touched her face.

She was about to say, "I will take it," when her attention was arrested by the conversation of two plainly dressed women at her right.

"Yes," one of them was saying, "they are going to take Grandmother Harris to the Poor house next week. You see, she's down with the rheumatiz, same as last winter, and they tnink that's the best place for her."

"But think of it," the other retorted; "there is hardly a family in the village but at some time or other has been glad of Grandmother Harris' help and sympathy in the dark days of sickness and death."

"I know that, but it's the way of the world. Old folks are like old horses; when their days of usefulness are done, the quicker they're out of the way the better."

There was a strange look in Hope's eyes as she put aside the new cloak and took up the old one again. And firm lines began to replace the smile about the corners of her mouth.

"Shall I do up the cloak, miss?"

'Not to day."

And before he recovered from his surprise, Hope was in the midst of the fast-falling snowflakes, going swiftly in the direction of Grandmother Harris' house, where the old woman had lived for more than fifty years. A simple, motherly woman, with work-hardened hands and a tender heart, who rejoiced with those who rejoiced, and wept with those who wept.

It was nightfall when Hope entered her little room. Then the reaction came, her heroism vanished. Taking off her cloak, she flung it across a chair that stood near.

"Lie there, you shabby old thing. I hate you!" she exclaimed, bursting into a perfect tempest of tears.

But the storm soon ended, better feelings came into her breast, and she put away the old garment as though it were some holy thing, and then went about the getting of her supper with a song upon her lips.

Rev. Robert Dean had been settled over his first parish about three months. And, though there had been some very tempting bait thrown out by pious and ambitious mammas and marriageable daughters, and a score of bright eyes—gray, brown, black and blue—had looked shyly, and saucily, and hopefully, and tenderly into hopeful, honest, infinitely expressive ones, he had gone his way, modest, well-bred, unassuming, and, if one judged by his appearance, untouched.

But that is all you can tell by appearance, for Robert Dean knew that if it chanced (as it seldom did) that a shy, sweet, appreciative face was missing from its accustomed place in his congregation, his inspiration was missing also, and he seemed talking to empty seats.

He had learned the story of Hope Whitney's life before he had been in Eldred a week, for tongues are not slow of speech in such small towns. And once he had heard Maud Russell say to a companion:

"I declare, Hope Whitney's old cloak is a disgrace to our church. I should think, with her wages, she might dress better."

It was just at the close of the morning service, and, not waiting to hear more, he passed to where Hope was standing, surrounded by a bevy of children.

"Good morning, Miss Whitney," putting out his hand. "I have been looking toward the school house with longing eyes for a number o' weeks."

"You need no longer look, but come," Hope responded, gracefully. "The children would be delighted."

"And Miss Whitney?" he questioned.

"Would also be pleased."

"Thanks."

It was not much; but it answered. The sound of her voice, the touch of her hand, lingered with him for days.

* * * * * *

"You see," Grandmother Harris was saying, "they were going to take me to the Poor house, because, in the winter, I get the rheumatiz so bad I can't work. One day, when I was feeling so discouraged I was fit to die, along came little Hope. I always call her little Hope because I have known her so long. Why, sir, I was there when she was born and did all I could to cheer up her broken-hearted mother. And I was there too, at the time her mother died. Hope, she didn't forget these things, though it's no more than I have done for many others, and it's no more than Christ tells us to do."

She paused a moment, as though lost in thought.

"But, as I was saying, little Hope heard what was going on, and she came up through the dreadfulest storm to say that it shouldn't be. And when she went away, I was richer by $20 than when she came. And it isn't the last she's done. But, bless me, I promised not to tell where the money came from."

"Have no fear," Robert Dean replied; "your secret is safe."

"I hope so. And anyway I feel better to tell some one about it, for I have felt so guilty to take the child's money, and she wearing her old clothes, when all the rest of the girls were having pretty furbelows. But she would have it so, and it would have been dreadful hard to have left the old place, as poor as it is. You can't think about the hopes that lie down among them old scraggy lilacs in the yard. For when I planted them I had my children with me, dear little creatures, running about as happy as birds. But what's the use of crying? I shall have them again before me."

When she talked it seemed to Robert Dean that the room was full of Hope's presence. It touched the smoke-soiled walls and the plain furniture with a strange sort of glory, as the brush of the artist transforms the unsightly canvass into a thing of living beauty. He was strongly moved. He could have knelt at that old woman's feet and thanked her for the words she had uttered.

But he did what was infinitely wiser. He left in her hand at parting that which kept her for many a day, and, hiding his joy away in his heart, he only said:

"Do not be troubled about the future. You shall never want while I live."

* * * * * *

The Sunday evening following his sermon grew out of the text: "Pure religion and undefiled before God and the Father is this: To visit the fatherless and the widows in their affliction, and to keep one's self unspotted from the world."

A new meaning lay behind his words, which thrilled the hearts of his hearers. He had been gleaning in a great field of life, and had come back burdened with sheaves. His vision of life and its labor had widened—the worker was growing with the work.

When Hope reached the outer door of the church she was aware that a severe storm was almost upon them. She hastened her steps, but suddenly a voice that set her pulses beating said, close beside her:

"Take my arm, Miss Whitney; the storm comes on rapidly."

Even as he spoke the rain dashed in torrents. Hope turned her face with a little gasp and hid it against his arm, as a vivid flash of lightning illuminated the earth.

He forgot the storm—forgot everything but the woman beside him and the love that mastered him.

He stood stood still and gathered her to his heart with a swift, passionate movement.

"Oh, Hope, if I may always shelter you! Can you trust me, dear?"

I can not tell you her answer, for the winds blew her low words away from all ears save his own. But this much I can tell you, that when Maytime hung her blossoms upon tree and vine, there was a wedding in that little church one sun-filled day. And amid all the envyings and regrets and rejoicings, no heart of all the lookers on beat with such deep joy and blessings as Grandmother Harris', as in her black dress, she sat in an easy chair near the altar, where stood the dainty, white-robed bride, taking upon herself the responsibility of a minister's wife.

* * * * * * * *

Years have passed since that bright day. Grandmother Harris is with her children, and her little, brown, gabled house has given place to a nicer new one. And the lilacs with the dear hopes hidden among the roots have long ago been consumed to ashes.

Through all the changes and into the high places where the hearts of the people have placed him, Robert Dean has ever been able to say of his wife, as did Wendell Phillips of his: "She is my inspiration."

Certain Wisconsin farmers in recent meeting dared to resolve that the land granted the State by the General Government for the establishment and maintenance of the Agricultural College ought by right to be used for that purpose.

Henry Stewart, who is good authority, insists that sheep do best upon soils derived from limestone rocks, and worst upon those derived from sandstone and flint rocks. There are some facts which seem to be against this theory. It is one well worthy of investigation.

HOUSEHOLD HINTS.

Rose water is a peculiar flavor for a sponge-cake, but it is highly recommended, especially if the cake is to be served with ices.

Chicken Fat for Cake.—The fat of chickens is said by a cake-maker of great experience to be better than the finest butter for making the finest cake. If the fat of boiled chickens is used, cook them without salt, and, there will not be the slightest flavor of fowl.

A Disinfectant.—An excellent and simple disinfectant for sinks and waste-pipes is made by mixing one large tablespoonful of copperas with one quart of boiling water. This solution is odorless and deodorizes instantly. The copperas may be bought at any druggist's for 8 or 10 cents a pound.

This receipt for ginger-cake comes from an English cook noted for the excellence of her work: Put one pound of butter into one pound of flour; add half a pound of finely powdered sugar, the rind of a lemon (grated), two tablespoonfuls of ground ginger and one grated nutmeg. Mix them together; then heat one gill of sweet milk—or warm it, rether—stir into it a half teaspoonful of bicarbonate of soda. Roll out, cut in square cakes and bake in a moderate oven.

One of the novelties and luxries of the period is banana cake. Take one cupful of butter, two cupfuls of sugar, one cupful of water or of sweet milk, three eggs, four cupfuls of flour, three small teaspoonfuls of baking powder. Mix lightly and bake in layers. Make an icing of the whites of two eggs and one and a-half cupfuls of powdered sugar. Spread this on the layers, and then cover quickly and entirely with bananas sliced thin. The cake may be flavored with vanilla. The top should be simply frosted.

Salad Dressing.—Beat one raw egg in an earthen cake dish until it is smooth, then add olive oil, a very little at a time, carefully stirring it into the egg with the right hand as you drop it in with the left. When the egg and oil make a thick mixture pour a little vinegar over it, then stir in more oil, and so on in this way until you have the desired quantity of dressing; season with lemon juice, pepper, mustard, pickles or onions chopped very fine, or with celery, water-cress, parsley, capers, olives, or with any flavor you choose. Hard-boiled eggs may be added also.

The season will soon arrive when the cook who delights to "labor in her vocation," can experiment with fruit; here is one of the many ways in which she may use raspberries: Stew the fresh berries, strain the juice, sweeten it, and put it over the fire in a porcelain kettle. When it boils stir in some corn starch rubbed smooth in cold water. The starch should be used in the proportion of two tablespoonfuls to one pint of juice. When thickened and thoroughly cooked pour into molds which you have wet with cold water. Fancy shaped moulds are desirable. Serve with cream and powdered sugar.

Economical Suet Crust for Baking.—If properly made, this paste will be found equal to pastry made from the best fresh butter. Take some fresh beef kidney suet, and having removed the skin, proceed to shred, not chop, the suet in as thin flakes as possible. For ordinary flaky paste the suet may be mixed in these flakes lightly in the flour with a knife, adding a little salt and cold water, and, if at hand, a few drops of lemon juice. The paste then turned out and rolled as for rough puff or flaky. If required for a better class of pastry, the suet, after being shred up, must be placed in a mortar and pounded to the consistency of butter, adding, if the suet is hard, a few drops of best olive oil to it during the process. When reduced to the desired consistency, the suet may be used either for short crust or puff, pastry in exactly the same way as butter would be employed, and if properly prepared, will be quite as good, and far superior to any pastry prepared with lard.

"Foolin' Away Money."

[Mary Edwood in Rural New Yorker.]

That is what one farmer remarked to another, while in town, each on the same errand, buying artist's materials. One seemed to enjoy the "foolishness," and in his heart did not feel he was spending his foolishly—thinking of the really fine picture which adorned the cosy rooms of his country home, with a feeling of love and pride for the daughter who had such good taste in decorative art, and was such a "splendid cook," always trying to make home pleasant in every way. He had the money to gratify her and was happy to do so. The other stood with his hands in his pockets, with mouth drawn down at the corners, and took the money from his pocket with the air of a man taking a seat in a dentist's chair.

This is the soliloquy homeward: "Well, I know my Mary can paint nicely; yes, I know she earned the money to pay for what lessons she has taken, and she earned the $5 I have spent for her to-day. I could have invested this in eggs that would have hatched a lot of chickens. I would have furnished the feed for them and she could give me half the chickens, but she wouldn't. She has awful high notions—thinks farmers might be gentlemen and their wives and daughters ladies, with their homes full of all sorts of "flummery." Money jingling in my pockets is sweeter music than a piano, and the pictures on my Government bonds and greenbacks are more to my taste than any canvass painted by the most famous artist. A farmer does not need any painted landscape when he can see the "cows in the corn." I do not know why my children hate farming so, unless they take after their mother. She is always complaining; she says she has nothing for her convenience; and even made a fuss when I made the last deposit in the bank. She wanted it to buy a dress to wear to church (she looks awful nice yet in the the alpacky I bought her five years ago). My barn is just a model; my horses are all thoroughbred, as are the rest of my stock. My carriage is as fine as any in town, and everything on my farm is first class. My house—well, yes, it is a little cramped, but the children will not stay any longer than the law requires, for I am afraid the boys are a little fast. When I am gone, how quick the money will vanish—wish I could take it with me. When the times comes the neighbors will be surprised at my bank account. If the folks at home knew, they would fret more than ever for a new house and all the fine things to fix it up. A farmer ought not to spend much time in the house, and if the wimmin folks are kept busy every minute they will not have much time to think about it. I am a sharp, well-to-do farmer, and have made money."

He did not say he had bowed himself down to the demon avarice and worshiped him, and will continue to worship him until the weight of his gold crushes him to earth, and his family care nothing for the departed excepting the gold to quarrel over. How many lives such as this has the world seen? Does it pay to get money and fail to have the love of our wives and children?